

METHOD AND SYSTEM IN ELECTRONIC COMMERCE FOR UNIQUELY  
IDENTIFYING PRODUCTS TO IMPROVE RELIABILITY AND  
CONFIDENCE IN TRANSACTIONS INITIATED ONLINE

A method, apparatus, system, or computer program product facilitates trustworthy electronic commerce by providing a methodology for uniquely identifying a product offered for sale online so as to improve the trustworthiness of a purchase that was initiated electronically. A product for sale in an online auction has a unique, tamper-resistant, physical tag applied to the product, after which the product or object is photographed, either as a digital image or a traditional photograph. The image of the product is then sent to the buyer in some manner. Assuming the buyer agrees to buy the product, the buyer eventually receives the product, presumably with the physically attached, tamper-resistant, tag. The buyer then has increased confidence both before and during the exchange of the product that the product is identical to the product that was described via the image of the product.